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ABSTRACT

This bulletin is intended to help school administrators at the higher education level who are responsible for developing and institutionalizing alcohol and other drug prevention programs. Stressed is the importance of thinking about the program's long-term prospects during early stages of program planning. The information is based on interviews conducted with program coordinators representing both large and small schools across the country. Part 1 describes features of prevention programs that can increase a program's chances of survival after the initial grant period. These include collaboration within the college community, strong commitment from top school administrators, an established long-range plan, objectives tied to the college's mission, networking outside the college community, a focus on building institutional capacity, a system of program accountability, and strategic use of public relations. Part 2 describes possible funding sources to replace initial grant or seed money. (DB)

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The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention
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Institutionalizing Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Programs

by
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Introduction

The challenge of creating a new alcohol and other drug prevention program is difficult enough, even with the jump-start provided by a grant from FIPSE (The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education) or seed money from another funding source. Sustaining the program over time, once the initial grant has ended, can be even harder.

Because resources are tight, finding the funds to keep the program going requires careful long-term planning. Continuation of the program also requires a strong commitment from top school administrators. Lacking such support, many programs postpone their long-term planning until it is too late, and they die out.

The purpose of this bulletin is to help school administrators who are responsible for developing a prevention program begin planning *now* to help ensure that their alcohol and other drug prevention programs continue after initial funding ends.

Experts agree that the best time to plan for program institutionalization is at the very beginning of the planning process.

Thus, the best time to use this bulletin is during the early planning stages—even as part of the application for initial program funding.

Programs that are just underway may also find the advice in this bulletin helpful in redirecting their work or in identifying potential new sources of funding. Early adjustments may make the difference in whether a new prevention program survives.

The bulletin is divided into two major sections: 1) *Building a Program for Long-Term Survival*, which describes features of prevention programs that can increase a program's survival chances after the initial grant period, and 2) *Identifying Alternative Sources of Funding*, which describes possible funding sources to replace initial grant or seed money.

This information comes from interviews conducted with program coordinators from across the country, representing both large and small schools. Each of these individuals has overseen the development of an alcohol and other drug prevention program that has stood the test of time and become a vital and institutionalized part of his or her college. The lessons they have to teach are a simple, yet essential, guide to long-term program survival.

Building a Program for Long-Term Survival

There is no substitute for a well-planned and well-executed prevention program, but that alone will not guarantee the program's survival. New programs that do survive, experts say, have several additional characteristics in common:

- collaboration within the college community;
- strong commitment from top school administrators;
- an established long-range plan;
- objectives tied to the college's mission;
- networking outside the college community;
- a focus on building institutional capacity;
- a system of program accountability; and
- strategic use of public relations.

To help ensure a program's long-term survival, early planning should focus on how to incorporate each of these features, as discussed below.

Collaboration within the College Community

The better alcohol and other drug prevention programs are campuswide efforts that involve as many parts of the college as possible, including athletics, health services, student activities, residence life, and campus security. Bringing together various segments of the college community is valuable for several reasons:

- Collaboration can create a critical mass of support on campus for alcohol and other drug prevention. The program is more likely to

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succeed when significant numbers of people care deeply about the issue and are part of the effort to do something about it.

- Linkages among segments of the college community can also create a constituency for long-term support of the program. If the program is integrated into the life of the college, and if various school officials therefore gain first-hand experience with its work, they are more likely to urge the administration to preserve it.
- During program planning, it is important to learn from as many college officials as possible who can share their knowledge and expertise about campus conditions and effective programming. If they have tried other prevention approaches previously, it is important to learn from their experience.
- Joint funding of prevention activities can help stretch the program's resources. Sharing credit will enhance, not diminish, the program's reputation. Cosponsored activities might also have greater appeal to students. Health services, for example, can launch a "wellness" program that includes, but is not focused exclusively on, alcohol and other drug prevention.

"Expecting that one person or one department is going to affect the culture of an entire institution is misguided. You need allies. You need collaboration. You need a sense of this being a truly institution-wide effort."

—Robert Ariosto, Vice President for Student Affairs, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, Connecticut

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To formalize this kind of collaborative effort, the college president can appoint an *advisory board* of key school administrators, faculty, and staff who provide overall guidance to the program but meet on a relatively infrequent basis. This advisory board can also include business owners, police, and other officials from the local community. Having this kind of advisory board gives the program instant credibility on campus.

The details of program development and implementation are best handled by a *planning committee* that meets frequently. The committee should include school administrators, faculty, and staff who are more closely involved in work related to alcohol and other drug prevention. In most cases, schools will also want students to serve on the committee.

Depending on funding levels, a school may be able to hire or assign a program coordinator. However, given that the program's success depends in part on active collaboration among different segments of the college community, and given the year-to-year uncertainties of the school's administrative budget, the planning committee should continue to be the program's center of action.

Strong Commitment from Top School Administrators

The long-term survival of a new prevention program eventually requires strong support and financial commitment from the school's top administrators. Without that, the new program will probably lapse as soon as funding runs out.

Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Act

While college administrators have long been concerned about student alcohol and other drug use, the driving force behind recent prevention activity has been the passage of the *Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Act*, codified as Part 86 of EDGAR (34 CFR Part 86).

One way that the planning committee might argue for continued funding for alcohol and other drug prevention is to tell top administrators about the Part 86 of EDGAR requirements. Failure to meet those requirements can put a school's federal funding in jeopardy.

Part 86 of EDGAR requires that every institution of higher education, as a condition of receiving any federal financial assistance, must provide the following information to each student and employee:

- a description of the health risks associated with the use of alcohol and illicit drugs;
- a description of any drug or alcohol counseling, treatment, or rehabilitation programs available to students and employees;
- standards of conduct that clearly prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of alcohol and illicit drugs by students and employees on school property or as part of any school activities;
- a description of the applicable legal sanctions under local, state, or federal law for the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of alcohol and illicit drugs;
- a clear statement that the school will impose disciplinary sanctions on students and employees who violate the standards of conduct; and
- a description of the sanctions, up to and including expulsion, termination of employment, and referral to local law enforcement.

The regulations also require schools to prepare a written review of their programs every two years to 1) determine their effectiveness and implement any needed changes, and 2) ensure that the schools' sanctions are being consistently enforced. The written biennial review must be made available to anyone who asks for a copy.

It is essential that the program planning committee have the ear of a top college official who will be an advocate for the program, is committed to its institutionalization, and understands how it can interface with every part of the school, from athletics to admissions.

The planning committee's work will be greatly facilitated if the entire college community is made aware that the program has this level and type of support. Busy and independent-minded college officials, whose collaboration is required for the program to succeed, need a strong signal that the school's top officials have made this program a priority.

Ideally, the new program will be associated with a department or center that can add credibility to its efforts and enhance its standing in the college community. This arrangement also benefits the program by facilitating access to resources and information. For example, at the University of North Carolina—Wilmington, the alcohol and other drug prevention program was overseen by the Dean of Students, Patricia Leonard. According to Leonard, having the program based in her office means it has "high visibility, high credibility, and strong advocacy."

An Established Long-Range Plan

When a seed grant is obtained, the planning committee should see the grant as part of a long-range plan that the school is committed to carry out. In other words, the seed money is to be used not just to fund the program temporarily but to help make the long-term plan a reality.

The key is to develop a long-term plan in advance *as part of the application for initial funding*. To this end, the program planning committee might do the following:

- conduct a needs assessment, including a survey of students and an environmental assessment that looks for physical evidence that alcohol and other drug use is a problem;
- review how college rules, their enforcement, and other aspects of the college environment might be contributing to alcohol and other drug use;
- examine any prevention efforts currently underway, and assess what has contributed to their success or failure; and
- identify potential collaborators both on- and off-campus.

"When we look at a grant, we don't look at it as just a piece of money for the short-term. We look at how it's connected to our college's planning and to the college's goals."

—Ruth Nicholson, Assistant Vice President of Economic Development, Valencia Community College, Orlando, Florida

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Waiting to use seed money to do this groundwork later on may prevent a new program from becoming fully developed by the time the initial grant has ended.

The needs assessment can play a critical role in building administrative support for the program. Institutional denial of the problem cannot easily withstand data that demonstrate the actual extent of misuse of alcohol and other drugs and their impact on the school's educational environment.

Objectives Tied to the College's Mission

Ultimately, colleges are in the business of preparing students to lead productive lives. If school administrators are to care about the program and support its continuation, they must come to see alcohol and other drug prevention as an important way to further this mission.

"If administrators can't see a connection between prevention programs and student academic success or crimes on campus, then your ability to gather support is going to be diminished."

—Eileen Coughlin, Associate Vice President, Student Services, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona

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To help administrators see this connection, the planning committee will want to articulate objectives that connect the prevention program with the larger set of issues that the college community cares about, including academic success, student health (or "wellness"), campus security, and fiscal management of the college.

The program's broader message should be that prevention is not pursued for its own sake but because of the serious harm that alcohol and other drugs can cause students, *even students who do not use them*.

Networking Outside the College Community

It is also important to network with local community officials. Because college campuses do not exist in isolation, any alcohol and other drug prevention program that fails to collaborate with local officials to limit student access to alcohol, prevent intoxication, and support the efforts of local law enforcement will be far less effective.

Collaboration with local officials also serves as a public statement of the college's commitment to reduce student use of alcohol and other drugs and their impact on the surrounding community. In turn, coordination with community-based programs makes it more difficult for school administrators to withdraw their support from the program, since doing so would run the risk of worsening town-gown relations.

Connections with programs on other campuses are also important. If an alcohol and other drug prevention program is actively involved in a regional or statewide consortium, school administrators will be more reluctant to end the program, especially if the consortium has political ties to a state agency or key legislators with influence over the school.

At the national level, the program planning committee might consider enrolling the school in the Network of Colleges and Universities Committed to the Elimination of Drug and Alcohol Abuse. The Network, through its regional coordinators, is an important source of technical assistance, since members are encouraged to share information with their colleagues at other colleges and universities (*for more information visit www.edc.org/hec*).

"You need to get tied into community groups that will say, 'This is a worthwhile program you have, and we want it continued.'"

—Peter Myers, Director, Addiction Counselor Training Program, Essex County Community College, Newark, New Jersey

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Focus on Building Institutional Capacity

Unfortunately, not every school will make a long-term commitment to continue the prevention program or to keep a central coordinator on staff. If this is the case, the program planning committee might focus during the initial grant period on training faculty, staff, and students who can continue the program's prevention activities without additional funding.

Consider these examples:

- *Curriculum infusion.* If faculty are trained or are provided money to support classroom innovation, integrating issues related to alcohol and other drugs in their courses can continue for years, even in the absence of additional funds. Infusion of this material is appropriate in a wide range of courses from every major academic discipline. Leaders in this field have been Northeastern Illinois University and other commuter schools, where student contact is largely restricted to the classroom.
- *Course development.* Support for new courses is another possibility. At Mount San Antonio College in California, an initial grant was used to create a nine-hour, credited course on alcohol and other drug prevention which student athletes take as a prerequisite to playing their sport. The course is now an official part of the curriculum, taught by paid instructors.
- *Student assistance program.* The program can train faculty and staff to recognize when students might be having substance use-related problems and to refer them to the appropriate campus office. School officials can continue to provide these services even if the prevention program does not survive.
- *Student-led organizations.* After receiving an initial push, student clubs that develop alcohol and other drug prevention programming can sustain their work without additional help over a long period of time. Central Connecticut State University helped launch a student organization focused on fitness and healthy lifestyles that incorporates an anti-substance use message. Leaders of the organization now train new members, who eventually assume positions of leadership.

A new program should avoid introducing labor-intensive projects when the college's top officials are unwilling to continue funding a staff position dedicated to alcohol and other drug prevention. At one university, for example, a student internship program, which required intensive faculty supervision, had to be disbanded when the school's FIPSE grant ended and the school did not pick up the cost.

"We didn't hire an outside person to launch our prevention work. For us it was better to find a group of [school officials] who were invested in this issue and could find time in their jobs to do one additional thing."

—R. Kipp Hassell, Dean of Student Development, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois

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Related to capacity-building is the idea of decentralizing the alcohol and other drug prevention budget rather than having a single office assume sole funding responsibility for prevention activities. At Valencia Community College in Orlando, Florida, administrators changed the job descriptions for several officials to include prevention-related duties. For example, the head of the student affairs office is now responsible for holding a certain number of prevention-awareness events each year. Obviously, this kind of decentralization is more likely to succeed when an advisory board and a planning committee have been involved from the beginning of the program.

A System of Program Accountability

The program will want to make evaluation a priority. In an era of fiscal restraint, long-term financial support for alcohol and other drug prevention, whether it comes from outside funding sources or is part of the school's regular budget, will be forthcoming only if the program's evaluation results warrant it.

Beyond keeping detailed records of program activities, the program might collect two types of evaluation data: 1) surveys of student substance use and 2) assessments of the campus environment and how it affects the use and impact of alcohol and other drugs.

Administrators will find studies that establish a program's cost-effectiveness to be especially persuasive. If the prevention program can put a dollar amount on substance use-related costs (e.g., campus security, student health services, liability insurance, property damage), then it should be possible to document *cost savings* as student misuse of alcohol and other drugs declines.

Evaluation results can also help the planning committee sort out which elements of the program need to be modified or discontinued. School administrators are more likely to continue financing a program if they are confident in the planning committee's ability to make these kinds of hard decisions. The program can use brief questionnaires for participants in workshops and other prevention activities to report what they learned and provide constructive feedback.

Strategic Use of Public Relations

Because of its association with political campaigns and commercial advertising, the field of public relations has a sullied reputation, especially in academic circles. In practice, however, public relations is nothing more than the effective communication of accurate information that supports a particular point of view.

Building a constituency for a prevention program can be greatly assisted by the thoughtful application of public relations strategies. The program planning committee might consider undertaking the following activities:

- Develop a program name and logo that is simple, memorable, and powerfully conveys the program's mission. At Northern Arizona University, the name "Project Daylight" is used. At the University of North Texas, the program name is "NT Challenge." At some schools, a student contest to name the program has been used successfully to launch a new effort.
- Keep the school's top administrators informed through regular and easily read reports that highlight the program's accomplishments.
- Solicit endorsements from other school officials and from the local community.
- Help implement high-profile awareness events, both on-campus and in the surrounding community, that make the program well-known among faculty, staff, students, and local opinion leaders.
- Provide opportunities for top administrators to participate in publicity events. At Mount San Antonio College, the school president was often invited to introduce guest speakers at special prevention events.
- Have a designated location on campus where prevention materials are available, preferably in a high-traffic area such as the student union or cafeteria.
- Use a mix of brochures, bulletins, posters, paid advertising, newspaper columns, letters to the editor, radio talk shows, and newsletters to parents to achieve visibility and raise campus awareness.
- Become established as a source of accurate information for campus news outlets. Ways to do this include offering press briefings, issuing news releases, and helping set up interviews with community-based experts.
- Capitalize on program visibility that is gained at the local, state, or national level through involvement in cosponsored programs, radio and television interviews, awards, or other means. Let key members of the campus community know about any public recognition the program receives.

Two cautions must be raised. First, accuracy is key. Incorrect or misleading information will eventually be found out, bringing disrepute to the program and loss of school support. Second, before releasing information about student substance use or even about the program, the planning committee should obtain clearance from a top-level school administrator, who will have justified concerns about protecting the school's image.

Identifying Alternative Sources of Funding

From the beginning, as part of its long-range planning, the program planning committee will want to identify future sources of funds to keep the program going beyond the initial grant. This activity is necessary even when top administrators have committed themselves to continuing the program, because they are still unlikely to provide all the funds the program needs.

Future grants are one possibility, of course. Many successful college programs have been able to continue because of the staff's successful grantsmanship. Early collaboration with the school's development office can assist by identifying funding opportunities and by helping draft good proposals.

Other sources of help include the following:

- The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), U.S. Department of Education, provides information through its

Drug Prevention Program on government-related funding opportunities.

- The Foundation Center periodically exams patterns of giving in the substance use prevention area and publishes directories of funding sources. The Center operates libraries in Cleveland, New York City, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.
- Funders Concerned About Alcohol and Substance Abuse is an association of foundations and other grantmaking organizations with a particular interest in prevention. Grantmakers in Health and Grantmakers for Children, Youth, and Families also address alcohol and drug issues.
- *CSAP's Foundation Resource Kit*, published by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), includes fund-raising tips and a list of other helpful publications on proposal preparation.

The Governor's office in each state is a source of information about state government funding opportunities, including discretionary funds controlled by the Governor.

Unfortunately, grant-funded programs are usually not seen as a regular part of the institution. For that reason, the program might also consider a fund-raising plan for developing a program endowment, as was done by Northern Arizona University. Gifts from alumni, parents, and foundations are possible sources of money.

At institutions with large student bodies, student service or health fees can be used to underwrite the prevention program. The program at the University of North Texas has relied entirely on student service fees since its FIPSE grant ended. Parking fees or charges for registering on-campus parties are other potential sources of revenue.

Fines assessed against students who violate college rules related to alcohol possession or use—e.g., use of fake IDs, hosting an unregistered party, serving alcohol to underage students, committing acts of vandalism—can be directed to fund substance use prevention efforts.

The program planning committee can work with school officials to find ways for other monies to be redirected to the program. For example, if a staff position is unfilled for a period of time, the monies budgeted for that person could be spent instead on the prevention program.

Programs can consider raising money through continuing education programs or workshops for which fees are charged. A second possibility is revenue from the sale of training and workshop materials, videotapes, and other products developed by program staff.

Summary

The advice offered in this bulletin on how to institutionalize an alcohol and other drug prevention program can be boiled down to several simple principles:

- Create a collaborative program that involves as many areas of the college as possible. Substance use prevention requires a multifaceted team approach.
- Get the strong support of top school administrators who will be advocates for the program.
- Work from a long-range blueprint, which includes a plan for using the initial grant to institutionalize alcohol and other drug prevention.
- Link the program's objectives with goals that are important to the institution, especially those tied to its academic mission.
- Establish ties with local officials and with regional and statewide prevention consortia.
- During the earliest stages of program planning, focus on building institutional capacity for programs and activities that can continue in the absence of dedicated funding.
- Establish a system of program accountability based on evaluation.
- Look for publicity opportunities to make the program front-and-center in the college's fight against the misuse of alcohol and other drugs.

Neglecting to think about the program's long-term prospects during early planning is a recipe for failure. Perhaps the most important advice of all is to think about institutionalization from the very beginning.

The Higher Education Center
For Alcohol And Other Drug Prevention

Our Mission

The mission of the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention is to assist institutions of higher education in developing alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention programs that will foster students' academic and social development and promote campus and community safety.

How We Can Help

The Center offers an integrated array of services to help people at colleges and universities adopt effective AOD prevention strategies:

- Training and professional development activities
- Resources, referrals, and consultations
- Publication and dissemination of prevention materials
- Support for the Network of Colleges and Universities Committed to the Elimination of Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Assessment, evaluation, and analysis activities

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